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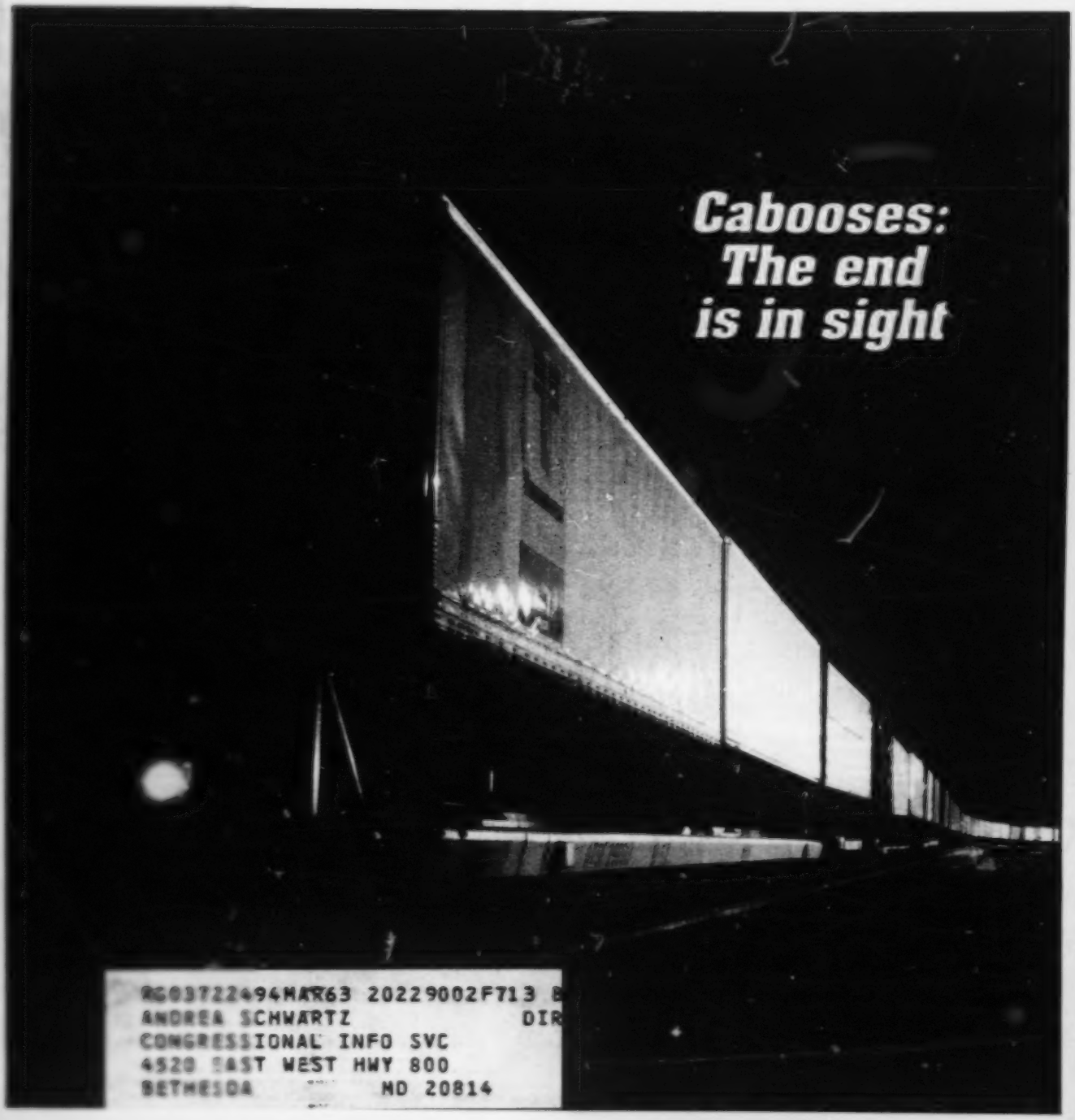
High-speed studies pick up momentum

February 1985

RAILWAY AGE

...for the new age of railways



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ANDREA SCHWARTZ DIR
CONGRESSIONAL INFO SVC
4520 EAST WEST HWY 800
BETHESDA MD 20814

RAILWAY AGE

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Features

27 Cabooses: The end is in sight

Cabooseless operations are safer as well as cheaper. That's the finding of railroads that are now running 1,000 cabooseless trains.

35 PLC looks to diversified role

Pullman Leasing, with a fleet of more than 24,000 cars, is no longer tied to the equipment of a single builder as it seeks to broaden its base.

36 Light weight, heavy return

Detroit Edison's experience with aluminum/steel cars has proved so rewarding that the utility is buying three new trainsets from Ortner.

40 Laser beams bright in CN's future

Reliability and truck-competitive rates helped put CN's Montreal-Toronto trains in the win column. Now, Laser service is ready for expansion.

44 High-speed rail: Down to serious business

The map of proposed high-speed passenger corridors is getting less cluttered, but planners who are still on the job seem to mean business.

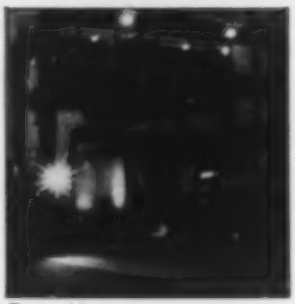
53 Amtrak: Miracle at Beech Grove

Brought back from the brink of obsolescence, the shop is efficiently handling Amtrak's work and assembling subway cars under contract.

63 Winning the war on weeds

Most vegetation control is now in the hands of contract killers, who are bringing an impressive arsenal of weapons to bear on the problem.

Cover: Santa Fe's Los Angeles-Chicago intermodal train is running cabooseless. The railroad has opted for the Glenayre end-of-train monitoring system. *Page 27.*



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Market Outlook

Equipment

CN Rail: Ordered 260 48-foot piggyback trailers from Le Groupe Canam-Manac Inc. of St-Georges-de-Beauce, Que., at a cost of nearly $5.5 million (Canadian). Capacity of each new trailer will be 3,478 cubic feet, 11% more than a 45-foot trailer.

New York City Transit Authority: Awarded a $50-million contract to Morrison-Knudsen to rebuild 236 subway cars. The work will be performed at M-K's Hornell, N.Y., facility.

W.H. Miner Division: Miner AggreGate outlets have been selected for 140 new ballast cars that Norfolk Southern will acquire this year (*RA*, December 1984, p. 12). Miner AggreGates were also selected by Burlington Northern for 300 of 400 ballast cars that are being retrofitted at the St. Cloud shop.

Facilities

BC Transit: Awarded a $3.3-million (Canadian) contract to Autelca AG of Switzerland for 100 BE-128 automatic ticket vending machines.

CN Rail: Awarded a $160,000 (Canadian) contract to Enterprise Electrique Roger Tremblay Ltee. for installation of a computerized energy management system in its Pointe St. Charles car shop at Montreal. A first for CN Rail shops, the new system will use microprocessor-based technology to control light, heat, air, steam and electricity.

Norfolk Southern: Will invest $496 million in roadway and other fixed plant improvements in 1985; $90 million is for projects carried over from 1984, and $406 million is for new projects (a 21.5% increase over 1984). Track work, budgeted at $276.9 million, calls for surfacing 5,000 miles, inserting 2.5 million crossties, and installing 875 miles of new and relay welded rail. A new intermodal yard will be built at Charlotte, N.C., and an existing intermodal yard at Chesapeake, Va., will be expanded. The budget also calls for additional ctc, track additions for the new General Motors assembly plant near Ft. Wayne, Ind., and dredging at the Norfolk, Va., coal piers.

Revenue freight carloadings

Commodity	Jan. 5 week	Dec. 29 week	Dec. 22 week	Dec. 15 week
Grain	17,989	16,974	20,104	27,741
Other farm products	3,103	3,065	4,159	4,677
Metallic ores	2,139	8,037	11,203	11,865
Coal	77,057	65,957	112,889	113,438
Crude petrol. prods., gravel and sand	6,885	5,830	9,111	10,527
Nonmetallic minerals	9,175	8,588	10,346	10,159
Grain mill products	8,230	7,421	10,539	10,533
Food and kindred products	7,807	7,167	10,241	11,023
Primary forest products	8,421	6,773	12,357	14,099
Lumber and wood products except furniture	4,039	4,210	7,388	8,888
Pulp, paper and allied products	12,451	8,256	15,042	14,851
Chemicals and allied products	10,622	10,983	20,210	23,673
Petroleum products	3,589	3,389	5,882	4,167
Stone, clay and glass products	7,289	6,727	9,210	8,760
Coke	4,673	3,536	4,510	4,579
Metals and products	8,189	4,989	7,448	7,333
Motor vehicles and equipment	10,544	7,676	10,579	23,702
Waste and scrap materials	5,174	4,459	7,882	8,888
Forwarder and shipper assn. traffic	4,148	4,488	6,757	7,488
All other carloads	20,315	20,389	69,589	69,340
LCL traffic	137	91	173	181
Total Cars Loaded	362,286	299,649	378,288	387,382
% change from previous year	(10.4)	(0.9)	17.7	(0.5)

Estimated revenue ton-miles (billions)	1985	1984	% change
1 week	12.1	14.1	(14.1)

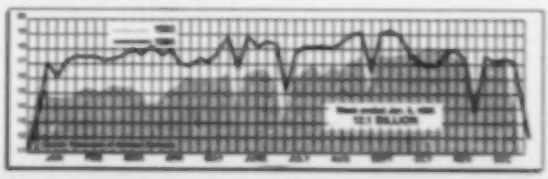
Piggyback loadings

	Dec. 29 week	Dec. 22 week	Dec. 15 week	Dec. 8 week
Cars	35,449	56,286	57,441	56,446
Trailers/containers	57,506	90,539	93,576	91,095

Cumulative total, 52 weeks		% change from 1983
Cars	2,690,659	14.6%
Trailers/containers	4,569,094	11.7

Rail freight traffic trends

Billion ton miles (Estimated)



Freight cars

	Delivered Dec. 1984	Delivered 12 months 1984	Delivered 12 months 1983	Ordered Dec. 1984	Ordered 12 months 1984	Ordered 12 months 1983	FRA Backlog and Unfilled Orders Jan. 1, 1985	Average Backlog 1984	Average Backlog 1983
Built new by railroads	736	12,388	5,570	751	15,054	5,942	4,748	6,988	3,800
Built new in RR shops	0	0	202	0	435	2	436	186	23
Built new—total	736	12,388	5,772	751	15,489	5,944	5,184	6,184	3,983
Rebuilt	0	0	100	0	0	160	0	0	23
TOTAL	736	12,388	5,872	751	15,489	6,004	5,184	6,184	3,986
Locomotives (new and rebuilt)	100	500	318	N/A	N/A	N/A	108	107	116

Source: Transportation Div., AAR and American Railway Car Institute